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*AND RUE*



*FERDINAND*

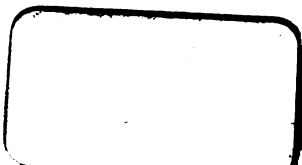
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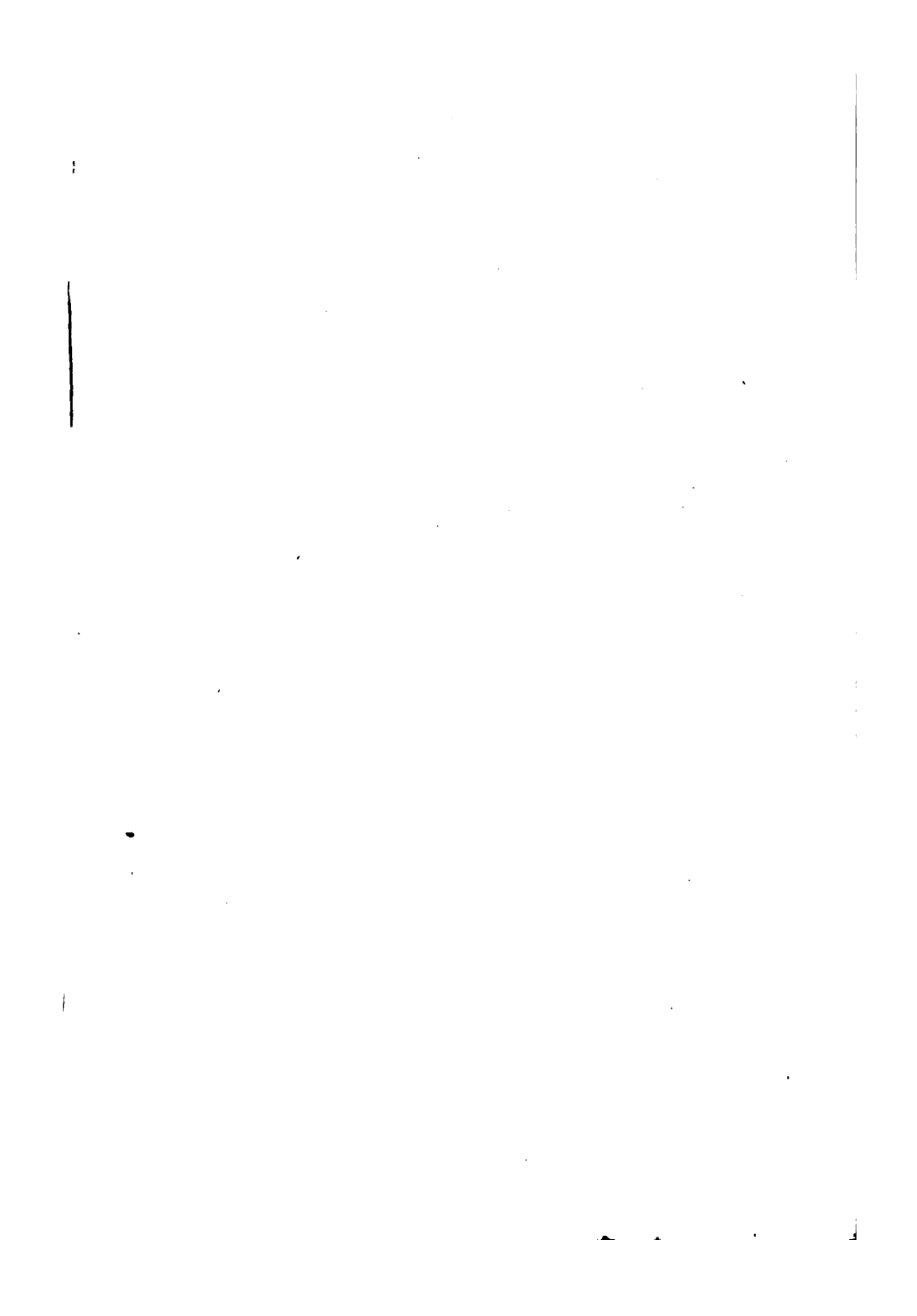
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HYDROMEL AND RUE

IN PREPARATION.

SPHYNX AND THE SUPPLIANT  
AND OTHER POEMS,

BY

FERDINAND E. KAPPEY

*Author of "Sonnets and Lyrics," and "Hydromel and Rue."*

READY IN THE AUTUMN.

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# HYDROMEL AND RUE

RENDERED INTO ENGLISH FROM THE GERMAN OF

"MARIE MADELEINE"

BY

FERDINAND E. KAPPEY

(AUTHOR OF "SONNETS AND LYRICS.")

LONDON :

FRANCIS GRIFFITHS

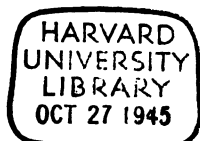
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✓



*Hessie Day fund*

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## INTRODUCTORY NOTE

*The poems that follow constitute the bulk of a little "book in the nude" published in Germany some six years ago under the curious title, "Auf Kypros," and issued by their author, now the Baroness von Puttkamer, under the pseudonym of "Marie Madeleine."*

*Perhaps the most remarkable feature in connection with the poems was the age at which they were written, for the author had only just reached her seventeenth year at the date of their publication. The volume here presented should thus afford another example of that strange precocity which, with its amazing intuitions, may be said to forecast an experience and display a knowledge of those psychic influences and sexual emotions either entirely withheld from or but dimly perceived through the channels of normal youth.*

*Such precocity, breathing as it does an atmosphere of elemental passion, inevitably conjures up the name of Marie Bashkirtseff, and in some sort challenges comparison. Although pointedly dissimilar in style to the work of that wonderful girl, "Auf Kypros" reveals a marked similarity in thought and outlook, and much the same disregard of the restrictions which convention imposes on the treatment of the sexual theme.*

*The main warrant for giving these poems an English dress is that the consensus of critical opinion not only justified their candour, but readily conceded their undoubted lyrical charm, while their frequent audacity was universally held to be redeemed by their transparent sincerity.*

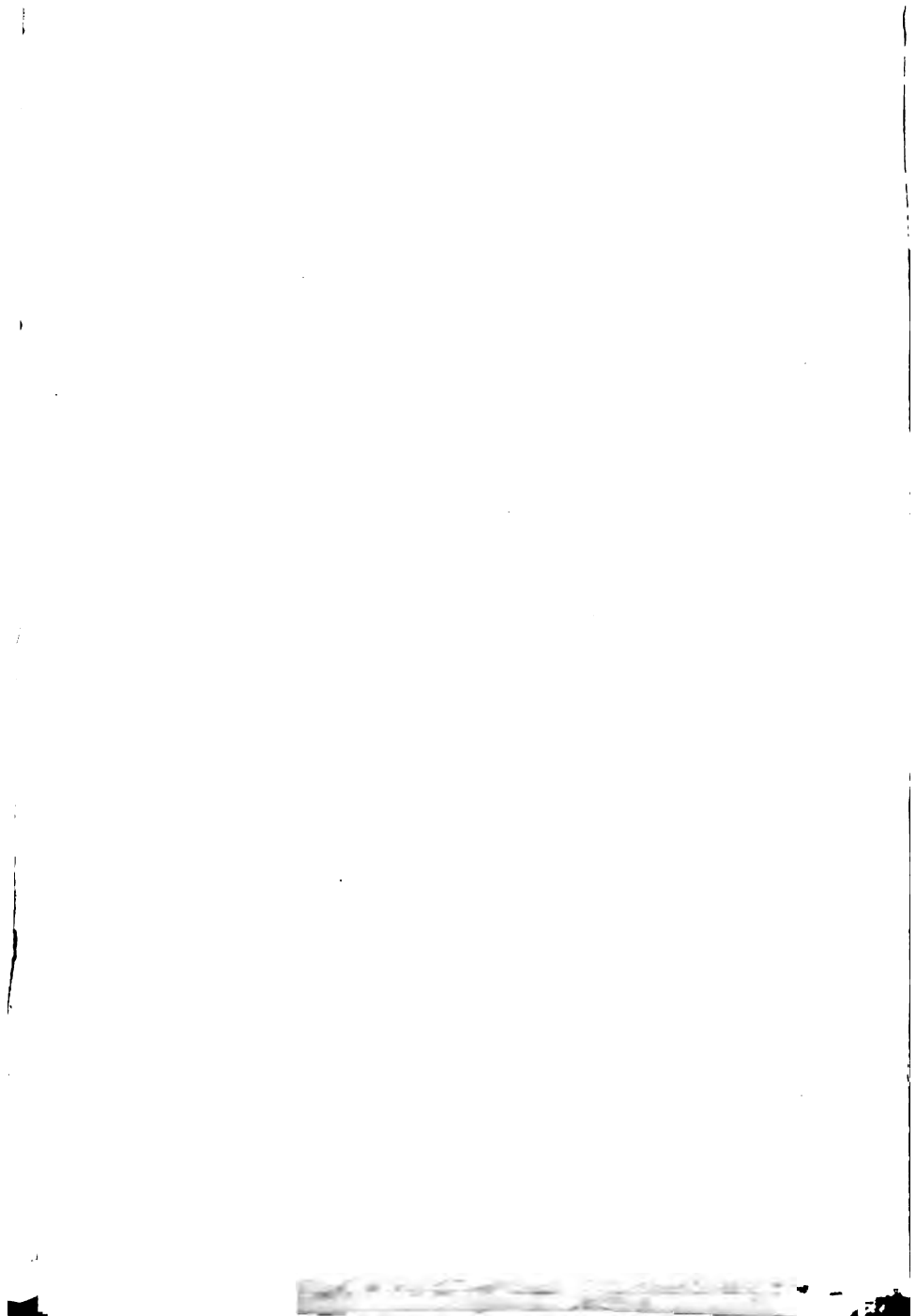
*It may be added that "Auf Kypros" reached twenty editions in as many months, and further, that the work is no isolated instance of sporadic genius, no sudden kindling of an immature talent*

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE

ix

*consuming itself in a single effort by its own excessive ardour. At the age of twenty-four the author has other much-discussed work to her credit, and at least one translation from the French which bids fair to pass into a classic.*

F. E. K.



# HYDROMEL AND RUE

## Ephemera

High Summer at noon, where her kisses are shed,  
Ripens the world to a deeper red !

Those myriad midges, ephemeral things,  
Circling on fire-spun diaphanous wings,  
Over the rushes and murmuring springs—  
Till the day is dead !



As motes of a moment that gleam in the sun,  
They tourney and dance till the light is done;  
Mixing and meeting and parting away,  
Ever at love till the fall of the day,  
Then weary of passion and weary of play,  
And their sleep is won.

So back to the earth. There was nothing of gloom  
In the day of that life, in that instant of doom;  
Only to living and loving assigned,  
Winging they worshipped and love-sick they  
pined,  
And a grave has been wrought in the dust by  
the wind  
For the bride and her groom!

## Compensation

Lo! the gentle arms of Autumn

Draw the earth to her embrace;

On that melting mist-white bosom

Earth shall cool her feverish face.

Here and there the gas-lamps flicker

Red, like eyes grown sick with pain,

And the rain-drenched pavement mirrors

All their weariness again.

Hand in hand with Night we wander ;  
Words are stifled in the dark ;  
Outward to the fields and onward  
Where the trees are still and stark.  
Heavy rain-drops lisp around us,  
Tears from far invisible skies,  
And their voices seem to render  
Clear with meaning all that dies.

Hand in hand with Night we wander,  
And my yearning soul is sick  
With the passionate apprehension  
And the silence that is quick.  
Oh ! but like voluptuous Autumn  
Drawing earth to her embrace,  
Soon my naked arms shall fold you  
To my bosom for a space.

## Foiled Sleep

✕

Ah me ! I cannot sleep at night ;  
And when I shut my eyes, forsooth,  
I cannot banish from my sight  
The vision of her slender youth.

She stands before me lover-wise,  
Her naked beauty fair and slim,  
She smiles upon me, and her eyes  
With over-fierce desire grow dim.

Slowly she leans to me. I meet  
The passion of her gaze anew,  
And then her laughter, clear and sweet,  
Thrills all the hollow silence through.

O, siren, with the mocking tongue!  
O beauty, lily-sweet and white!  
I see her, slim and fair and young,  
And ah! I cannot sleep at night.

## The Last Desire

Like ghostly fingers all night long the rain  
    Taps at the window-pane;  
Among the shivering leaves the winds make moan,  
And all my heart goes out to you again—  
    You, who were once my own.

Framed in a mist of unaccustomed light,  
    Your face, grown sad and white,  
Looks down—your parted lips so strangely red!  
I would that you had passed beyond the night,  
    I would that you were dead!

That o'er your shameful body, joyless child,  
The healing earth were piled;  
That you again might burst the bonds of death,  
And rise to scent—a lily undefiled—  
The Dawn's inviolate breath.

## Revulsion

With weary eyes the Winter day  
Looks into the curtained room,  
On the high walls clouded in purple and grey,  
And the great bed muffled in gloom.

The trees that border the house are clad  
In a vestment of silver-white,  
And the soul of a sadness, with wings as sad,  
Is slowly lifting in flight,  
And my heart is its nest to-night !



Proud is your withered face and stern,  
With its pallor so strange and new ;  
The curtains are drawn, but your deep eyes  
In the twilight that filters through.

And your lips that drink at the fount of my  
Are cold as the Winter day,  
And marred and scarred with a nameless stain  
But hold you ! Enough ! I pray !  
I beg you, Away—Away !——

## Failure

So, hour by hour, and day by day,  
The fragmentary years unroll,  
And all things drift like smoke away,  
And I must ever miss the goal.

My wishes are the waves that sweep  
Unceasingly the patient strand,  
That, spent and broken, backward creep  
Through tiny runnels in the sand.

The middle course of life and death  
Is mine to tread till darkness fall;  
And O! to draw the deeper breath  
Of life, or cease to breathe at all.

And year by year the days are shed;  
And better death if life be this!  
Here is the vain pursuit; ahead,  
The goal that I must ever miss!

## Crucifixion

Nailed to a cross, your beauty still aglow,  
A fierce incarnate agony you seem;  
Like purple wounds upon a field of snow  
My scarring kisses on your body gleam.

How thin your fair young face, your limbs how  
spare,  
How frail upon your breast the blossom lies!  
But oh! the torch of lust is flaming there  
Through darkness and in triumph from your  
eyes.

When you, a virgin sword unstained, yet fierce  
To brook affront, came trusting unto me,  
Your innocence was like a sword to pierce,  
And I desired to stain your purity.

I gave you of the poison that was mine,  
My sorrow and my passion—all I gave;  
And now behold the depth of my design :  
A tortured soul too late for tears to save.

That I might now re-fashion from the dust  
My shattered altars, and redeem the loss !  
Madonna, with the kindled eyes of lust,  
'Twas I who nailed you naked to the cross.

## The Talisman

Love's outward form of worship well I knew;  
But love I knew not till I came to you.

And since our lips have met you are to me  
Love's one obsession, and the sole decree.

Your gentle voice, its rise and swooning fall :  
It seems through all my days I heard you call ;

It seems I strove to capture long and long  
Your secret, like a half-forgotten song

That touched my spirit to I know not what  
Of life once cherished, and remembered not.

## The Silent Approach

It is the Spring-tide's tristful air,  
That softly weighs our laughter down.  
A veil of vapour faint and fair  
Trails softly o'er the town.

The mournful poplars black and bare  
Seem still by Winter thoughts opprest;  
And tangled skeins of colour flare  
Behind them in the West.

How pale and perfect at my throat

    The lilac that you gave me seems,  
As round us in the silence float  
    Our dear unspoken dreams.

But soon upon our souls descend

    The star-gleams of a sanctioning sky ;  
Further into the night we wend  
    Expectant—you and I !



## Nocturne

This long-urged sacrifice I make,  
Shall find me most desired and fair;  
Behold! it is for your sweet sake,  
I press these roses in my hair.

A burning red is on my lips,  
Within my eyes the light is clear;  
My loosened garment floor-ward slips,  
And still I wait your coming, dear!

O, would you that another quenched  
My thirst while yet the thirst is new?  
And from my yielding body wrenched  
The blossom that belongs to you?

O shall another take from me  
This treasure that I make your right?  
I look into the night and see—  
Dear God! a horror in the night!

## X      Beneath the Surface

All night I saw your vision bright;  
Within me snarled the Brute and stirred;  
My longing cried to you unheard  
Throughout the night—throughout the night.

To you, unwilling amorist!  
To you—whose nimble strength I broke!  
O how your sleeping passions woke,  
And how you knelt to me, and kissed!

I longed for you, remembering  
Your body's dear abandonment,  
Your sultry boudoir's aching scent,  
The wounding rapture and the sting.

"I know it all," you smile and say.  
But then you know not how, possess,  
I longed to leave upon your breast  
The fang-marks of the beast of prey.

## The Last Encounter

With knife and gun we took the mountain height;  
The pine-sewn ridges loomed in dusky tiers;  
A scarf of mist above us drew from sight,  
The sound of falling waters in our ears.

Through ragged paths and upward; through the  
maze  
Of straggling thorn and bush and tumbled  
stone;  
Save for the beating of my heart, the ways  
Were silent now. We two—we were alone!

Through underwood and thicket—upward still;  
The fallen fir-twigs snapped beneath our feet;  
I saw you stride ahead—intent to kill—  
Now slow and stealthful, now erect and fleet.

And then the heather! I remember well  
The broad heath sloping downward as we stood;  
The breeze, the slanting light—Ah! I could tell  
A thousand things that wrought the baffling  
mood.

The air was heavy with the scent of hay,  
And like a mantle seemed to cloak us round;  
A great black bird winged rapidly away  
In rising curves, then dipped and sank to  
ground.

The purple heather claimed us like a sea;  
The purple heather held us like a grave;  
The stifling silence would not let us free,  
The only sound—the difficult breath we gave.

Of all that conflict not a word you said,  
No word of love you whispered, sombre friend.  
All things like blood before our eyes swam red;  
We stood at bay—Life bleeding to an end!

## The Unfading

The garden of my soul grows duller;  
But one sweet bloom scents all the air;  
One scarlet blossom keeps its colour,  
The sinful flower you planted there.

In those cold winter days the willows  
Hung frosted by the river bank,  
And virgin snow in drifting billows  
Along the margin rose and sank.



In those cold Winter days and frozen,  
When driving north-winds left their smart,  
I—I of all the world was chosen  
To nestle warm against your heart.

And in your room it mattered little  
The cruel ending of the year,  
The ice-bound Empire chill and brittle,  
Because I loved, and you were near.

And even to-day as life grows duller,  
The garden of my soul looks fair,  
For one deep blossom keeps its colour,  
The scarlet sin you planted there.

## From Kyprus to Golgotha

With giant wings superbly spread,  
My Dämon plucked me from the night,  
And all my loosened passions sped  
A storming herd in reinless flight :  
Like foaming steeds that take the plain  
At call of dawn, and dash away  
With rolling eye and streaming mane,  
And lusts that will not brook delay.

The frenzied rabble bore me deep  
    Into the Vale of Sin and Shame;  
I felt my senses sway and leap  
    Like sinuous tongues of wind-blown flame;  
For early love was in the air,  
    And on the roses red and white  
Lay heavy all the scented snare—  
    The mystery of day and night.

The crimson wine of eager life  
    Ran riot through each tingling vein,  
And smouldering fires of fierce desires  
    Were blown in sparks like fiery rain;  
Until at last a blazing hell  
    Of flame shot skyward—coil on coil  
That swayed and broke, and hissing fell  
    And clothed me in a burning toil.

With heart consumed and broken wings,  
I turned me from that place and went  
With all my changed imaginings  
Through dreary wastes, alone and spent.  
Then Nausea rose—the Great Distaste  
That seemed to catch from many a grave  
Some reek of ordure—rose and raced  
Behind me like a threatening wave.

Long in the vale I wandered—long !  
And well I marked the unclean powers,  
The monstrous birth of nameless wrong,  
The torture of deceitful hours.  
About my head, through vapours rank,  
I watched the circling bats alit ;  
And lo ! with every breath I drank  
The choking poison of the Pit.

Tho' steep the heights beyond and far,  
I yet had scaled them, dearest mine,  
Had not my star—my only star—  
Above the darkness ceased to shine;  
Had not your love, Beloved, proved  
Cold as the marsh-light and as brief!  
You could not see my tears unmoved,  
And ah!—that you could know my grief!

Some touch of pity still might lift  
Your heart to me could you behold  
My broken body cast adrift  
On bitter waters, dead and cold.  
And yet what matters! Far and near  
My hopes and dreams all shattered lie,  
And in my soul deflowered I hear  
The Spring-song of the souls that die.

## Inseparable

Without you, worthless is all worth ;

Even rest shall be denied me

Within the eternal bed of earth

If you sleep not beside me.

When Death shall quench the thirst I have,

Which is my being solely,

My longing shall transcend the grave—

You shall not miss me wholly.

## One Summer Night

Now the heaven's starry tissue  
Trembles through the darkening height,  
And a thousand voices issue  
From the portals of the night.

And the army of transgression  
Ventures forth with happy cries,—  
Sin on sin in sweet procession,  
Yearning upward to the skies.

Shreds of cloud begin to cluster  
And the lights of heaven fail ;  
Yet behold the dancing lustre  
Of the fire-flies in the vale.

Buds on bush and tree are swelling  
Underneath their armoured caps ;  
Not in sleep this life-compelling  
Night shall find my spirit lapse.

And—vain wish !—I would you found me  
Here, compliant and alone,—  
You—your sheltering arms around me,  
And your lips upon my own.



Then, ah ! then this hopeless yearning  
Surely on your breast would die ;  
You would know the truth, returning  
Kiss for kiss and sigh for sigh.

Here beneath the sky are mated  
Flower and stem, and fire and dew,  
Only I, alas ! am fated  
To be widowed—wanting you !

## A Mood

The fields lie barren and broken and blurred,  
The breath of the Autumn is chill and faint;  
Near by in the alders, a single bird  
    Is fretfully tuning his plaint.

Grey is the curtain and softly drawn  
By fingers of mist over castle and cot,  
And the light looks empty, and colder than dawn  
    In a land where the sun is not.

And the last far beacon of ended day,  
That flutters upon her Western porch,  
Deepens a moment and dies away  
Like the glow of a burnt-out torch.

And the wide-sent odour of withered bloom  
Lies heavy and sad on the ghostly air,  
And my young soul thrills to a sense of doom,  
And the death that is everywhere.

A whispering night-wind wakes to tell  
Her burden of grief—and she speaks to me  
Of a Summer that's past, and a fond farewell,  
And the Never-again-to-be.

## Rain

I hear the ceaseless murmur of the rain—  
A day-long fretting at the window-pane.

From every tree, like tears, the rain-drops stream;  
Softly they whisper through my tired dream.

And deep within my soul sweet hints of song  
Awake once more, after a sleep so long.

I thought them dead, because I lent my days  
To wilder thoughts and less melodious lays.

Where are they now !..... The rain without falls  
sheer.

The beating of my heart is all I hear,

And those first hints of song which years ago  
Brought forth the longing that I cherished so ;

The boundless hope that pillowed in my breast,  
The pain that has not yet been put to rest.

My beating heart is all I hear !—The rain  
Is fretting tear-like at the window-pane.

## Moriturus

Upon your sunken cheek a hectic stain !  
Upon your parted lips a cry of lust ! —  
Death stands beside your bed, and die you must !  
You long to live, and know you long in vain.

Beneath the snow-clad earth your beauty soon  
Shall unremembered be,—and you will sleep  
While moaning winds above your grave shall  
sweep,  
And forest-owls sit screaming at the moon.

Are you afraid of death? I know indeed  
Your young and timid years the end resent;  
Those lovely lips—once red—were never meant  
To kiss and suffer kissing without greed.

For me what matters? I have understood  
The pain and stress of strange idolatries;  
Have wrought the nameless curse of desperate  
    eyes,  
And played with passion in an easy mood.

But I have kissed to-day, as never yet,  
Your sinking bosom till my passions ache,—  
And I would gladly perish for your sake,  
My early star of love—so early set!

One little hour—no more—for breathing space !  
Death stands beside your bed—and you must die !  
One lessening hour—and still the moments fly ;  
I hear your clock tick out the hour of grace.



## Resurrection

A small grey-feathered song-bird sings  
    Within an early budding tree;  
But to my aching soul it brings  
    A sound like sobbing memory.

Ah me! I had forgotten quite!—  
    Was not our one day's love a gleam  
Of dim Autumnal evening light?—  
    A shadow followed in a dream?

Yet never in the House of Sleep,  
Where dream-lit flambeaux palely burn,  
Have I once known my spirit leap  
To you, or seen your dark eyes yearn;

Or heard your soft voice plead among  
The love-thoughts of that only day,  
As round your neck I madly clung,  
As in your folding arms I lay.

And so, I held you quite forgot!  
I held that you were dead to me!  
Though Spring is here, I see her not,  
Your pallid face is all I see!

## A Queen

Magnificent through life she drew  
A dumb subservient retinue  
That bent before her flippant will,  
And waited for the knife to kill—

For that her word was law!  
And from her golden car she looked  
With cruel eyes that nothing brooked,  
On slaves that trembled in her sight,  
And did her bidding day and night,  
And bent the knee in awe.

She mounted with her queenly gait  
The marble stair, erect, elate,  
And there within his lonely room  
She sought him out—even he to whom

Her heart was captive yet !

She cast her purple robe aside,  
And at his feet she knelt and cried :  
“ O once again to thee I bow,  
Lord of my life—take pity thou  
Or teach me to forget.”

He heeded not;—the distance held  
A beacon that his eyes compelled,  
For still the glowing future lured  
His soul to action, and endured

Beyond her passionate call !

Then, “ Lost ” she sobbed;—and ever drew  
Through life her voiceless retinue,  
And looked with cruel eyes among  
Her trembling slaves—a thinning throng  
Spared from her bloody thrall.

## Ballad

Go not in the forest, Lord Edelfried,  
For the mid-night hour is here,  
And the mist beneath the alder grove  
Is lying white and drear.

The mist lies white like a winding sheet,  
And night's sombre draperies  
Are hung and looped by an evil hand  
Round the gnarled and knotted trees.

Go not in the forest, Lord Edelfried,  
Think well ere you depart,  
By the Holy Mother who carries deep  
The Seven Swords in her heart.

But he kissed her brow, and his son he kissed  
On the mouth with the deeper love;  
And he swung to the saddle and spurred his horse  
Straight for the alder grove.

The Sorceress lay in wait for him  
On a shattered Altar-stone;  
And like drops of blood in her raven hair  
The fox-glove dimly shone.

“ Why come you so late, Lord Edelfried ?

O answer and tell me true ;

My body, cold as the forest flower,

Is heavy and wet with dew.

“ The Women of the Mist they came

And danced to me circle-wise,—

And they sang of the blood of a little child,

And his dying agonies !

“ But O, my heart, it was all for you,

And I heeded never a word ;

Only the thudding sound of hoofs

In the under-wood I heard.



"Your horse is shy and it trembles so!  
But 'tis I myself shall dare  
To wipe the sweat from his milk-white mane  
With a bunch of my raven hair.

"For you were his burden, Lord Edelfried,  
Your hands were at the reins;  
And yours were the feet that weighted down  
The silver-stirruped chains.

"He has carried you many and many a time,  
And here, of his burden released,  
Has waited and pawed at the Altar-stone  
Till the Dawn was in the East."

She fondled the brute with caressing hands,  
And his nostrils quivered wide  
As she leant on his withers and laughed at the  
man  
Who was silent at her side.

Then she threw her arms about his neck,  
And his golden brow she kissed :  
Her labouring breath was fierce and hot,  
But her mouth was cold as the mist.

Then he struck the cross that he wore betimes :  
“ O I perish in body and soul !  
If I fall to the lure of the Sorceress  
'Tis Death shall exact the toll.

“ You have poisoned the blood that is in my veins,  
And my lips are withered and dry,  
And I turn from Home, and Wife and Child  
When nightly I hear your cry.

“ I turn from the pillow that offers me sleep  
Whenever I hear you call,  
To cool my lust in a world bewitched—  
A slave to your damning thrall.

“ But never again to your hellish art,  
Shall I surrender my life,—  
For I long to gaze as once I gazed  
Into the eyes of my wife.

“To gaze in her innocent eyes as once  
I gazed in my innocence,—  
And to take my son on my knees again.  
You, and this blasphemy hence !

“I swear it now by the head of my son—  
By that life of my life—farewell !  
Henceforward the Virgin shall be my guide,—  
To Hell with your magic—to Hell !”

She cast herself to earth, and round  
Her body, passion-torn,  
The hemlock and the bramble grew  
The nettle and the thorn.

Then sprang Lord Edelfried to horse,  
 And rode as for life and limb,—  
 And tho' he spurred to the ends of the earth  
 His longing went with him.

\* \* \* \* \*

Moons waxed and waned and the Summer  
 brought

Her measure of garnered sheaves,  
 And the mournful trees in the alder-grove  
 Rustled their sering leaves.

Moons waxed and waned and the golden leaf  
 Grew grey as the Autumn passed,  
 And the firs beneath the Castle wall  
 Sighed in the dreary blast.

Lord Edelfried looked into the night,  
And out of the deep there came  
The sound of a voice, and it seemed to him  
That it cried upon his name.

So soft and sweet the sound, so full  
Of passionate yearning and pain,  
His tortured heart took up the cry,  
And echoed it forth again.

*"I swore by the head of my only son!"*  
But he listened and was dumb,—  
For the voice that he knew broke through the  
storm,  
And entreated him to come.

And he walked from the castle as in a dream,  
And her voice was the charm that led;  
And the withered leaves that strewed the way  
Were crisp beneath his tread.

“Lord Edelfried, Lord Edelfried”—  
Like a bell was her voice in the night:  
“The lips that once mine own have kissed  
Can never forsake me quite.

“Your eyes have seen my nakedness,  
And your eyes can never forget:—  
You were mine on the night that is unforgot—  
You are mine forever yet!

“ The leaf is fallen, the flower is dead,  
But mine is the freshness of Spring;  
My beauty is still the desire of your heart,  
And your heart is the song that I sing.

“ Shattered and wet is the Altar-stone,  
The rain drives chilly by;  
But under the sheltering maple-tree  
I have made us a bed that is dry.”

He knelt him down on the rain-drenched earth,  
And, laughing, he kissed her feet :  
“ But Oh ! I have longed and longed for you—  
My Sorceress—O my sweet !



“No comfort I found nor any rest;  
The days of my longing were years”—  
And his wasted and pallid cheeks were wet  
With the flood of his passionate tears.

“O give——” She stretched her hands to him,  
And she sweetly laughed consent.  
Through swaying branches high above  
The hissing storm-fiend went.

But soon—too soon the dawn came up,  
And the lordly Edelfried  
Walked slowly hence, and his heart was full  
Of the love that was so decreed.

His lips were warm and a deeper red  
Was theirs than ever before;  
A glowing fire was in his eyes,  
And his face was pale no more.

He came to the castle and mounted the steps  
With a light and joyous tread;  
In a room where a pictured Virgin smiled  
His only son lay dead.

## When—?

O suffer me once more to come to thee,  
I will not break thy rest if thou art ailing;  
Suppressed shall be desire, and unavailing  
The urgent prompting of mine ecstasy.

Silence shall be supreme, when like a bride  
My lips upon thy lips shall yield their greeting;—  
When last my stormy heart is madly beating  
Against thy breast its ineffectual tide.

These many days I thought of thee alone,  
And when my lips were ravished by another—  
Ah me!—the yawn was difficult to smother,  
Remembering all thou art to me, my own!

My dearest! Tell me when . . . when comes  
the night  
From whose delaying hour I live to capture—  
I, lying in thine arms—the golden rapture;  
Coiled cat-wise—supple, soft, submissive, white.

## The Chant Royal

O tell me why, when day and night  
Give voice to all these rippling streams,  
Asleep and in my waking dreams  
I thirst !

The Royal Chant is in my ear,  
The song of waters running free;  
My lips are parched, and woe is me !—  
I thirst !

## The End is Now

The Autumn-pallid sun looks down  
Upon your face that keeps the brown  
Of Summer; and the yellow hair

That sweeps your brow is palely lit,  
And like a gold net cast to snare  
My soul, as if to capture it.

The end is now!

In poignant passion breast to breast  
We stand, my arms about you lest  
You lose my meaning—you who know  
How loth I am to let you go.  
That I might hold you ever thus!  
It is the last hour left to us;

The end is now!

✓ The symbolled bondage that you wear  
Upon your hand I may not share;  
It seems a fetter forged to hold

Your spirit down,—a chain to weigh  
Upon your life; a glint of gold  
From deepest hell; a curse to slay.

The end is now! ✓

I mind me of the mountain wind  
Whose healing fragrance left behind  
So sweet a promise; and the flight  
Of stags along the mountain height;  
The dripping grass; the trailing mist;  
The wooded vale where last we kissed.

The end is now!

## Had you but Guessed

Your Castle of Longing, O my Knight, stood high  
Against the dawn, and signalled as you went,—  
You saw its banner flying, and rode by,  
O Knight of mine, without presentiment.

The Feast was set, the pillows were prepared;  
But having passed, you would not turn again.  
O fool, that craved for all, yet nothing dared,—  
That knew not victory—deeming all was vain.

The happiness was yours had you but guessed;  
It sought a difficult path to you, and won  
A too precarious lodging in your breast.  
Too late now ! fare you further. I have done !



## The Stricken Way

Hail, fellow pilgrim ! Reach to me your hand,  
And come with me into that distant land  
Where Sorrow and Desire walk garlanded ;  
    And where, in silence and in sorrow like,  
    Others shall fare with us and sun-ward strike—  
A crown of thorns upon each weary head.

Come to that land whose grey unsailed-on seas  
Give sighing response to the whispering breeze  
Which seres the first-bud with its scorching breath,  
    The first-bud rounding into crimson bliss,  
    And dreaming of the light that shall not kiss  
Her leaves—because untimely given to death.

Ours is the Land, the gloomy seas unsailed,  
The passion voiceless and the sorrow veiled !  
Come, let us go. Upon our brow is known  
    The sign of those who make their dwelling  
        there :  
    The thorny crown, the pain, the sure despair,  
And Death—ere yet the bud of Life is blown.

## Lucifer

With fever and fret my hours are scored,  
And sleep comes seldom to bring release;  
The light of day is a thing abhorred,  
And ever in vain I pray for peace.

When will the Prince of the Night endow  
With darkness the great world's trodden ways—  
He of the sheltering wing, whose brow  
Is lit by a single star ablaze?

Whose brow is lit by a single star;  
While evermore where the thorns are set  
In a twisted circlet, scar on scar  
Burns crimson where the blood is wet.

I know he smiles; that his sinful eyes  
Are charged with scorn of an Empire lost;  
That his soul is a chamber where never dies  
The Eternal torture of the Host.

Tho' cold be his bosom that never warms,  
Tho' frozen his lips, I will not demur . . .  
O come! Let me perish in your arms,  
My Best, my Beloved: Lucifer!

## Vagabonds

Because mine eyes are fashioned so,  
Shalt thou forsake thy house and hearth,  
And like a beggar thou shalt go,  
Despised of men and nothing worth.  
Fair fame and fortune—all shall be  
As trodden dust beneath your feet,  
Because of me!

And we shall know the town at eve

Where, in the gas-illuminated street,

Unhappy people make-believe,

And proven friends are few to meet—

Where lust and hunger, toil and hate,

In noisy riot pay their due

To cynic Fate.

Such bitter things and sweet shall fill

Our souls like hydromel and rue;

The weary hours that others kill

Shall wing about us strange and new;

No longer shall we need to guess

Their meaning when poor mortals play

At "No" and "Yes."

For we shall sound Life's iron strings  
That do not yield to fingers gloved,  
And gather from the heart of things  
The most abhorred, the best beloved.  
We shall not shrink from bloody strife;  
Not we! Once tasted we will drain  
The Cup of Life.

Contempt will follow at our heel,  
And all will damn us—and in vain!  
For us the solemn priests shall kneel  
In prayer again and yet again.  
Into the world of night we go  
For ever cursed—because mine eyes  
Are fashioned so!

## Far away the Hooded Mountains

Far away the hooded mountains  
Gaily fly their misty pennants,  
For the Spring has come upon them  
With the glamour of her smile.

And the early green is breaking  
Lightly on the leafless forest,—  
Yet within me sighs a sadness  
Spring has laid upon my soul.

O to gaze once more—once only—  
In your eyes—those stars of sorrow  
Mirrored in a sea of pallor,  
All too dearly loved by me.



## Bohème

Now damp for me this desperate mood  
 Which your impassioned kisses feed.  
 Through every vein my gipsy blood  
 Flows like a raging storm-whipped flood,—

O take you heed !

I love you not. For absent he  
 In whose fond heart my own is merged.  
 I love you not. And yet, ah me !—  
 Shall I surrender to your plea  
 So fiercely urged !

O what a furnace burns within,—  
 And how I famish for a mate !  
 I come at your behest,—the sin  
 Be on your soul. You risk to win  
 My deathless hate !

## Outlived

Mine eyes resent the roseate light at length,  
For I have looked upon the light so long;  
Too deep the level tint, the gleam too strong,—  
I sickened in its strength.  
Behold me silent now and unresponsive !

Cold are your lips—even kissing ; cold your touch ;  
Our love is dead—it died I know not why ;  
And heavy is my heart that it should die,—  
For then I loved you much—  
When first your longing lifted and compelled me !

---

## The Water Witch

The young witch stared from her pestilent pool

Over the reedy marsh;

Her eyes shone clear and her flesh was cool

In the noon-day hot and harsh.

“Take care, young blood, take care, take care—

You with the yellow hair!

“ Scarce have you time to spy my charms  
When straight the thought is fired,  
And you long to hold me in your arms  
The one, the all-desired !—  
Red are my lips and sweet to win,—  
But cold is my heart within.

“ ’Twere good to lie with you, love-caressed;  
But oh ! my heart is of stone,—  
And a coal-black bird has made its nest  
In my hair, and sits alone  
With lifted bill and folded wings,  
And sings—and sings—and sings !

" My flame-enkindled eyes allure  
And blister your captive youth.  
My stony heart is a thing apart  
That knows not love nor ruth;  
But come—we two shall be as one  
Under the noon-day sun."

Then silence fell, and the torch of day  
Made sere the swamp-grown reeds,  
And soon the mating lovers lay  
In a bed of poisoned weeds.  
Under the noon-day hot and harsh  
The waters flooded the marsh.

## At Parting

Under the rain of ashes dies the flame,  
Till not a glow beneath me or above  
Reflects the thing that bore so sweet a name;  
Therefore these three white roses of my love  
I bring to you—dead now, and odourless!

I know that I am wholly lost—alas!  
Because I would not stoop to count the cost.  
I know indeed that I am greatly lost,  
And lonely once again am doomed to pass  
Through desolate ways alone with my distress.

You, too, shall be forsaken of the light,—  
And stranded on this inhospitable shoal—  
This round of loveless earth—you too shall fight  
The empty hours with laughter when your soul  
Cries out to me in all its loneliness.

x      **After !**

**This is the end of all when all is said !**

**No sweeter balm, no dearer rest could be,**

**After so fierce a joy : My weary head**

**Upon your knee ! . . .**

## Confession

I love the great desire  
That never finds its goal;  
I love the fierce consuming fire  
That burns my soul.

I love the sighing strain  
Of life's orchestral scheme;  
The passionate longing that is vain;  
The idle dream.

I love the aching thrall;  
Ambition brought to dust, —  
Renunciation best of all—  
For that is lust!



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